

Appendix C: Survey to Assist with Evaluation of Maine's Growth Management Program

November 26, 2002

To those interested in growth management, sprawl, and smart growth:

Every four years, the State Planning Office is required to evaluate state and local efforts to achieve the purposes and goals of the Act. We are now in the process of conducting that evaluation and would like your opinion on the program's effectiveness. Please take **five to ten minutes to complete and return the attached survey** to help with this effort.

In 1988, the Legislature enacted the Planning and Land Use Planning Act (also known as the Act) to establish local comprehensive plans and land use management in each municipality that would, in turn, support 10 statewide goals (30-A MRSA §4312 (3)).⁹⁰

Changes to the law in the early 1990s narrowed the Program's original focus to a town-by-town response to managing growth. Indeed, most land use decisions are made at the local level and local growth management has achieved some notable successes.

Nevertheless, in the late 1990s, the State Planning Office began to recognize the importance of regional and state influences on local growth patterns. In its 1999 report *Continuing Challenges and Growing Opportunities*, the State Planning Office concluded that local planning efforts alone are insufficient. Growth patterns and their impacts often occur and must be addressed on a regional basis. What's more state regulations, policies, and investment unwittingly discourage orderly growth and efficient use of municipal services. It became apparent that public investment (state, municipal, and federal) is needed to support carefully planned growth rather than simply respond to the impacts of growth and development.

Today, while the framework of the original Act remains intact, the program recognizes that strategies to address its goals require a broader focus than local planning and zoning alone. In addition to its work with local decision-makers over the past four years, SPO has focused additional efforts on state and regional policies that affect land use patterns, including:

- ◆ reforming state policies, programs, and investments that encourage development sprawl,
- ◆ bolstering the health and well-being of both Maine's traditional natural resource-based industries and service center communities,
- ◆ providing relief to suburbanizing communities, and
- ◆ developing strategies to support markets for traditional, compact neighborhood development.

Instructions: The State Planning Office has used multiple mailing lists in order to share this survey with as many people as possible. We apologize if you receive more than one solicitation and ask that you respond only once in the format that is most convenient for you.

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- A. To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl;
- B. To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development;
- C. To promote an economic climate which increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being;
- D. To encourage and promote affordable housing opportunities for all Maine citizens;
- E. To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas;
- F. To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas;
- G. To protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public;
- H. To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources;
- I. To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources; and
- J. To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

The survey is designed to be quick and easy and, for most of you, is being electronically distributed. You may reply in any one of four ways.

- You may submit your response on-line at <http://www.state.me.us/spo/cpip/survey.htm>. If you received a copy of this survey in the mail, have Internet access, and would like to respond electronically, please feel free to follow this link and recycle the paper survey.
- If you prefer, you may fill out a paper copy of the survey, and mail it to us at State Planning Office, SHS 38, Augusta, ME 04333, or
- You may fax it to us at 287-6489, or
- You may e-mail your response to us: jody.harris@state.me.us

Regardless of how you choose to respond, **please send your response to the State Planning Office on or before December 18, 2002.**

All responses will be treated as anonymous and confidential.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe that the State Planning Office's approach of supplementing local planning efforts with regional coordination and reform of state policies **has been effective** in making progress on the 10 statutory goals?

☐ Not at all ☐ Somewhat ☐ No Opinion ☐ A Good Deal ☐ Extremely ☐ Don't Know

2. Do you believe that the State Planning Office should **continue with this approach**?

☐ Absolutely Not ☐ Perhaps ☐ No Opinion ☐ Probably ☐ Definitely ☐ Don't Know

3. On a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 means not effective, 2 means somewhat effective, and 3 means highly effective, **how effective do you think each of the following strategies are:**

Getting the State's house in order by:

- ☐ using state capital investment to support "smart growth"
- ☐ identifying and removing hidden subsidies of sprawl in State funding formulas
- ☐ adjusting regulations so they don't push development outward

Supporting natural resource-based industries like farming, fishing, and forestry by:

- ☐ regarding them as businesses and assisting them accordingly
- ☐ buying or leasing development rights
- ☐ strengthen right-to-farm law
- ☐ taxing these industries at current use and reimbursing towns for lost revenue
- ☐ supporting research and development for greater value added

Strengthening service centers by:

- ☐ supporting the "Downtown" initiative
- ☐ expanding home ownership in centers
- ☐ shifting a fair share of costs of providing regional services to the region
- ☐ allowing flexible taxation to spur development

Provide relief to suburbs by:

- ☐ emboldening local comprehensive plans to protect rural areas and direct most development to growth areas
- ☐ encouraging adoption of strategies that require new arrivals pay a fairer share of costs
- ☐ encouraging communities to use their local authority to direct growth in less expensive ways

Supporting the development of traditional, compact, Great American Neighborhoods by:

- ☐ identifying and educating markets for traditional neighborhood development
- ☐ preparing a design manual about details of traditional neighborhood development
- ☐ preparing a handbook of model ordinances to allow traditional neighborhood development
- ☐ providing incentives for sewer and water lines

4. What other things do you think the State Planning Office should **consider in its evaluation** of the program's effectiveness in achieving the 10 statutory goals? _____

The following is demographic information that will allow us to understand who is responding.

5. Are you a (**check one** that represents your primary position):

- ☐ Local appointed official (including volunteer boards/committees)
- ☐ Local elected official
- ☐ Local planner
- ☐ Regional planner
- ☐ Member of private business/development organization
- ☐ Member of environmental organization
- ☐ Legislator
- ☐ State agency representative
- ☐ Other (please describe) _____

6. What is your involvement with the Growth Management Program (**check one** that best represents your area of involvement):

- ☐ Primarily involved with local comprehensive planning
- ☐ Primarily involved with ordinance development
- ☐ Primarily involved with providing local technical assistance
- ☐ Primarily involved with state agency policy or program
- ☐ Primarily involved with legislative initiatives
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

7. Do you have any **additional comments** about the State Planning Office's responsibilities with regard to administering the Growth Management Program? _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.